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A NOTE ON THE PREUSS'S CLIFF-SWALLOWS *Lecythoplastes preussi*  
AT OYO NEW RESERVOIR.

Some observations were made on these birds during a visit to the reservoir between 26th February and 2nd March, 1969. The flock size was about that noted before (Ashford, R.W. (1968) Bull. Niger. Orn. Soc. 5 (18) : 42-44), some 150-200 birds. The swallows were busy building nests in the flushing-pipe tunnel and, at least near the tunnel end, the nests were about two-thirds complete. Mud for the nests seemed to come only from about a square yard of the reservoir shore about 100 yards from the dam. Here the shore was depressed and consisted of very fine, wet mud. Even in this small area the birds were taking mud only from certain patches, so forming pits of 2-3 inches diameter and up to an inch deep.

One day during the visit the Cliff-Swallows were not seen at all until evening, presumably having temporarily left the dam area.

J. Broadbent.

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AVOCET *Recurvirostra avosotta* AT ZARIA.

Good views were obtained at a range of about 30 yds. of an Avocet *Recurvirostra avosotta* on the shore of a small lake at the N.T.C. Demonstration Farm at Samaru, Zaria at 7.30 a.m. on the 28th February, 1969. The bird, in company with a Black-winged Stilt *Himantopus himantopus*, was 'sweeping' the water in characteristic fashion. The Avocet is a winter visitor in large numbers to the Sudan and East Africa but is seldom encountered in West Africa, and the only previous records for Nigeria appear to be those of Sharland (reported by Elgood, Sharland & Ward, Ibis (1966) 108 : 84) of single birds at Ringim Lake near Kano on 20th February, 1955, and 11th February, 1956.

N. J. Skinner.

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WHITE-FRONTED BEE-EATER *Melittophagus bullockoides*  
AT LIBREVILLE, GABON.

On 7th September, 1968, I noticed what appeared to be four White-fronted Bee-eaters *Melittophagus bullockoides* feeding in a residential area near the southern edge of Libreville, Gabon. A search for the birds was made the following day. They were located nearby on the edge of an open, grassy area (of relatively high elevation) bordered on one side by a river and otherwise surrounded by the wooded edges of mangrove swamps. Excellent views were secured and the identification confirmed.

The birds were seen almost daily during the remainder of September, as well as during subsequent visits to Libreville in October, November and December. Only four were seen and they were usually together. They seldom left

the grassy area, but during the middle of the day they could sometimes be seen flying over the residential area where they were first observed.

Late one evening in October, the bee-eaters could not be found, but my wife and I had noticed that before nightfall the birds would move to the trees close to the river at a point where there were holes in the river bank. When I climbed down the bank to examine the holes, all four bee-eaters flew out of one hole and settled noisily in a nearby tree. Whenever a bee-eater tried to return to the hole, a Banded Martin Riparia cincta would swoop down and frighten it away. By the time we had to leave, only two of the bee-eaters had managed to re-enter the hole.

Because two of the bee-eaters were duller in plumage, particularly as to the red throat, it is believed possible that the four birds constituted a family group.

The White-fronted Bee-eater is not listed in Bannerman's works on West Africa, but "Birds of the Southern Third of Africa" by Mackworth-Praed and Grant includes Angola within its range.

J. P. Gee

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SOME NEW RECORDS FOR LAGOS.

The following species are believed to be new for the Lagos area. They are not listed in "A List of the Birds of Lagos" by Sander (Nigerian Field, Vols. XXI & XXII), nor have they been found mentioned in subsequent writings available to me. Most of these observations have been corroborated by Messrs. J.B. Heigham and M. F. Forrester, who are also active in Lagos at the present time.

Black Heron Melanophoyx ardesiaca: Two flying over Victoria Island and Kuramo waters on the evening of 4th July, 1968; they circled overhead as though wanting to land, affording a good view and eliminating confusion with the Reef Heron Demigretta gularis. A single bird was seen at Apapa marshes on 2nd February, 1969, and a single bird was present on 9th March, 1969, at the same place.

Knob-billed Goose Sarkidiornis melanotus: A single bird at Apapa marshe. 2nd February, 1969. No knob on bill; the bird was apparently in immature plumage. Not seen on subsequent visits.

Peregrine Falcon Falco peregrinus: An adult bird feeding at Apapa marsh on 9th March, 1969, was seen to take a Chestnut and Black Weaver Cinnamopteryx castaneofuscus. Another different individual (probably immature) was observed hunting over Victoria Island on 16th March and again on 18th March, 1969.

Speckled Pigeon Columba guinea. One bird seen on ground near rain-filled water-hole on Victoria Island on 16th August, 1968. The bird was quite shy and it flew away when a cyclist passed near. A single bird has been seen on Victoria Island on several occasions during February and March, 1969.

Niger Mourning Dove Streptopelia decipiens: Two birds, believed to be a pair, were present on Victoria Island from 12th February to 13th March, 1969. They spent much of their time in the shrubbery along the the creek which forms the northern boundary of the island, but also fed on nearby sandy areas and perched on telephone wires in the vicinity. These birds were carefully checked for identification and compared with Red-eyed Turtle Doves S. semitorquata which sometimes visit the same area. The two species were seen feeding together. Be-